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Pete “Maverick” Mitchell’s (Tom Cruise)
Photo-Matched Promotional Still Flight Suit
Top Gun (1986)

Pete “Maverick” Mitchell’s (Tom Cruise) photo-matched flight suit from a still from the promotion of Tony Scott’s Top Gun. This flight suit was specifically worn in promotional photographs taken for the film and differs from the style of flight suit that Maverick wore in the film itself. This may have been one of the first costumes made for the film, as well as one of the earliest promotional photos, with the filmmakers later deciding to revise the look of Maverick’s flight suit to a different style. The most prominent differences are its alternate patches and different upper chest pockets, which more align to the style of flight suit worn by Lieutenant Commander Rick “Jester” Heatherly (Michael Ironside) in the film. Distinctive creasing on the left leg photo-matches this flight suit to a still of Cruise wearing it in front of an American flag, an image which was widely distributed in the film’s promotional campaign.

The highest-grossing film of 1986, Top Gun won an Academy Award® (out of four nominations), a Golden Globe®, and a Grammy®. In 2015, the film was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress, as being “culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant”. A critically acclaimed and massively successful sequel, Top Gun: Maverick, was released in 2022.

The military-issue sage green flight suit features a long zipper running down the front; zippers and pockets along the chest, arms, and legs; an adjustable waistband; a sewn-in internal Western Costume Co. label stamped for “Mauverick [sic].” This same style of flight suit was also worn in the film by Rick “Jester” Heatherly (Michael Ironside), though padding stitched into this suit’s shoulders is unique to flight suits worn by Cruise.

Part of the signature look of the naval aviators at the Top Gun academy was the array of squadron insignia seen on their flight suits, and this flight suit is no exception. It is emblazoned on the upper right chest with a VF-1 fighter squadron patch, on the left shoulder with an American flag patch, and on the right shoulder with a US Navy Fighter Weapons School patch, while a replica of Mitchell’s “Maverick” name patch is attached to the upper left chest via fastening strips. Other than the replica “Maverick” patch, there is no evidence of the patches on this flight suit having ever been altered. The suit shows evidence of wear consistent with on-set use, handling, and age, including notable color fading (likely from light exposure) to the front side.

Estimate: \$15,000 - 30,000

